

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Executives
AHCA/NCAL Leadership and Members

FROM: Janice Zalen, Sr. Director of Special Programs

SUBJECT: H1N1 Update No. 17

DATE: June 24, 2009

The Centers for Disease Control and Protection (CDC) updates its H1N1 influenza case numbers only on Friday so I don't have new numbers for this week's update. At a congressional hearing this morning, Dr. Richard Besser, CDC, noted that the CDC is surprised that the numbers continue to increase in this hot weather.

This morning's hearing, conducted by the Senate Special Committee on Aging was on the topic, "Emergency Preparedness, Aging, and Special Needs: Prepared vs. Scared!" LuMarie Polivka-West, Florida Health Care Association, testified on behalf of AHCA/NCAL. Although the hearing was on all hazards planning, H1N1 came up in testimony and in questions. LuMarie's testimony was very well-received. The testimony can be accessed at <http://www.ahcancal.org/advocacy/testimonies/Testimony/StatementHurricaneDisasterPreparedness.pdf>.

Respiratory Protection

We are still awaiting word from CDC on whether it will be changing its recommendation that N95 respirators should be used in health care settings treating H1N1 patients. In the meantime, the California Association of Health Facilities (CAHF) recently revised its Model Respiratory Protection Program Manual and has made this resource available to all interested long term care facilities. As CAHF notes in the preface, long term care providers are not mandated by state or federal law to provide a respiratory protection program for their employees and such a program is not a simple undertaking, yet it is an important program to consider. The CAHF manual provides long term care providers with the information and tools needed to get started in setting up a respiratory protection program for their employees, should they want to do so. The information is attached and may also be accessed on CAHF's Web site at <http://www.cahf.org/public/dpp/planning.php>.